Feb 17
1923

Monks.

Friday.

Dearest,

What an awful bore — we've got Molly Hamilton here for the week end, & as she has to go on Sunday night, I don't suppose we can bring her over, or come ourselves, much though we should like to. If we did come, we'd come for tea, & bring our food — but I don't think it likely.

A very small percent will come for Quentin. She doesn't like it, I don't want it for myself.

Went yes. Duncan come over? — anyday except Wednesday, or Monday. I want to read you my play, as soon as possible, as, if it is to be finished, I'd better do it here.

Also, would my nephews come over for lunch & spend the afternoon in water hunting? We are invaded by the ballet & Duke people in shoals — Nick among them, — I can't think why. So a little human society would be acceptable. But

36v

how is it that M.H. is only spending one night?
A triumph for Dolphin's implacable character, as usual.
But discretion forbids me to say more.

I do think it time Roger ceased to be in love with you, & to resent my presence. After all I'm your only surviving sister, & knew you long before he did.

Oh my sisters in law, Mrs Stansfeld are now arriving! NYPL Nelly & Lottie are back, frozen (but secretly delighted) at the dirt of the house. Thanks to you, the mattress are now absolutely perfect, like the best Steal.

I don't offer you & Duncan beds, as they would be repudiated. But beds there are.

Let me know about the Children, if I don't see you. Are you shopping in Lewes on Tuesday?

V. W.

HAMILL 2/10/68

June 11
1924

37

Harpenden. Friday

Dearest.

I hear that Leonard has told you of my iniquities.

What has now happened is that we have asked Nelly to stay on as general, which, greatly to our relief, she has agreed to do. I then suggested that I should try to find Lottie a place in Gordon Sqre. She said at once that she would be perfectly happy if she could be with you, either as Cook or house maid - anything indeed except nurse. She has the makings of a very good Cook I think. Nelly says she would help her. I don't think her temper is a real objection, as I think it is mostly due to the fact that she & N. get very much on each others nerves alone here, & she would probably be much better in a bigger place. Anyhow. She is ready to do

37v

anything in order to be worth you, & She,
such a nice character that it is a pity she
should be lost. She would go at the end of
March.

Would you let me know if there is any
chance of this, as I said I'd ask you
before any one else.

Will you be entitled a
Monday 2? I might come then —

Yrs.

NYPL

HAMILL 2/10/68

(1924)

38

Hogarth.

Friday, 22nd Feb.

Dearest,

We should like you to do all the decorations you schemed for, except Leonard's room. This you schemed at £7. So that the cost of the whole would then be I suppose £20 . 4.

I hope to let you know about it soon. The sitting room in a few days, which would still give you time. It's a question of selling some things here, & I don't know what they'll fetch. Needless to say, my aim is to get you 1 decent to paint it for £25. But would your paintings be detachable, or on the wall stay?[2] This is a matter of some importance, as we may be turned out after 10 years, in which case your masterpieces would be destroyed, & I couldn't sell them to nourish my old age.

Would you start work at once?

38v

We shall move in on the 13th.

I'll come to tea on Monday, if may—
anyhow I shall be at 52 that
afternoon.

[signature]

We have decided to let the studio for £75.
Would you tell Wimpler Davidson or
anyone else: We want to let it
by the year.

NYPL

HAMILL 2/10/68

Feb 24
1924

39

Dearest,

We have decided that we should like you & Duncan to paint the lettering room for £25 as your estimate (I've no doubt you're charging only a 20 to the right price.) So would you start as soon as you can.

Have you heard anything from D. Dendrum? There are some other people who probably want to take the studio, & are coming to see it tomorrow. But I think we must give him the first choice, if he would let us know asap.

I'll come in to tea tomorrow.

VB

I'd further give you the measurements of the book cases: there will have to be two.

Monk's House
Rodmell
Lewes
Sussex

Aug 1924

Sunday.

Dearest,

I found your letter on getting back from Charleston last night, & I must say that Angelica's teeth have their good side — at least I get the longest letter I've had from you this ten years, stuffed with titbits such as most welcome. Oh how fascinating facts are — the Maggs, the magazine Club, the lamp with deers feet, which I remember, & also the ink-pot made from a hoof. So if you have any spare time, where else a liberal account, no make up, given instead of the day. I feel that we are mere butterflies in the sun: while the Bells remain for ever. The image is not getting to the moment. It's raining hard. We've been to the post, seen the heads & shanks through the window, had tea, & shall soon draw the blinds. All your family appeared yesterday. Duncan was rambling the passages with a rag, most sympathetically — which indeed is his outstanding quality — he brushed me, & put my shoes to dry, as I had bicycled into the middle of a blowing field, there fallen off, & had clods hanging to my hair. What a spectacle for Clive! But Clive has

entirely come round to the Nahum, indeed recants all he said, which I think was Leonard's craft who took it for granted that Mary was also horrible, whereas Flinders wishes to write. Clive thinks her articles most amusing - Mary MacCarthy; he finds really too thin: so there you have it in a nutshell. I suspect I shall be in hot water this summer over Mary. (Hatch). My attitude will be dignified & unreproachful - How can I talk at my ease, I shall say, when Lord Berners will be reproaching it, via Mary via Clive, to Lady Colefax on Tuesday? But such is life, I shall say: the way of the world. What say; & I shall keep my friendships unbroken, but unreserved. what do you think?

Then we had tea; Clive at the head, Duncan at the bottom; Duncan as fresh as a bride - I've never seen him look handsomer, or appear more freakish (which reminds me, do the Bells expect a different strain?) Julian was rather Byronic, Quentin winking & stuffing mastic & sugar cake which I brought in a fish basket tied up in toilet paper. After tea we had a jolly, we old men, over the fire, chiefly about Gambo, & some boasting on my & Clive's part about our articles, but this bored Duncan; poor devils, how gen. painters must be bored by all our talk about "articles." It was a windy day, but lots of vegetables out in your garden. - Duncan says, the terrace is very like the terrace at Blenheim, except that some of last years cabbages are growing in the middle.

Then we went: then Duncan went to Firle with us, & told me all about the funeral, which he has a wonderful gift for acting the clergyman shaking hands, a old Mr. Druce the undertaker, & Pitta in black & the death, wen which is to be taken to Rottingdeanches in a portmanteau - in short

Monk's House
Rodmell
Lewes
Sussex

2

You can imagine all that. As we got into Firle, there came by a motor, with a veiled lady flashing her eyes at us, against ruddy Robin, & no wonder. Drew their quercrable tea at the table as I paused - cut bread & butter, & a plate of cress. Go home: where I had your letter, cooked 4 sausages, & to bed.

That is all the news I can think of. Ottoline has written asking us to Nay, & I must now fabricate some answer; & Tom has written, asking for news of Angelica: he has a good heart; I wish I were in touch with Elena, whom beauty (ista distance) never fails to fascinate: I saw her, Mrs. Rathbone, old Lady da Vesci, & Marny all in a bunch at a Concert the other night! What a haul! Marny has the head of a fish gnawn Cabhorse, grey, white lace collar, with some Animal female, called Davies I think, of Kensington Gore: but I had no talk with any of them. I was with Mortimer: he said to me, with some penetration; "There's a friend of yours" pointing to Mrs Rathbone. She is still chewing her cud; wasn't Mr. Rathbone in love with somebody? — bitter Straw: canker to her worm; that her expression. — Elena sitting beside her, monumental, innocent, beneath mounds of fur. It's odd that you & I have never had what fur might call a good piece of fur all our lives — never think have now. Perhaps Angelica

will have a good piece of fun. (Langham wrote a line to Tavistock to say how she is.)

I went to Hammonds, & got the very thing — a piece of matting large enough to cover the whole studio for £2. So that's a good foundation: then I shall buy a rug: some artificial flowers, which will sell cheap, hang a canvas or two, rent me. big poor struggler, arrange my books, & so have a superb working ground for the most advanced thing of Bloomsbury. Its odd to be going back there, not to Richmond. I feel as if I were beginning going on with a story which I began in the year 1904: then a little insanity, & so back.

We have Rose Bartholomew for the week end - I wish my name were Bartholomew. NYPL She has been mad, squints, & is singularly pure proud. Nelly has gone back to clean the flat. R.B. is doing for us. Shanks is packing his linen, & leaving for ever. Mr Hogg has run away, owing Hammond £40 for furniture. & £4 to the village shop. Our speculation stands immensely high; & really, Redmell is so lovely that I shant buy another house just yet.

We go tomorrow.

Poor darling dolphin, what a life she has. Ursula is made up to her by her fringe troop, who are as gay as they are lovely, & as chaste as they are proud.

Leonard sends his love, & says do for gods sake write him an article; or he'll have to ask Flinders.

L. M.

HAMILL 6/1/66